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ABSTRACT

For those school districts who wished an evaluation of the Listen Look Learn (LLL) system at grade 1 before expanding it into higher grades, a small study was conducted to determine what effect the transition to a basal reader would have on the child taught beginning reading in the LLL program. Two school districts submitted end-of-first-grade Metropolitan Achievement Tests data and end-of-second-grade Stanford Achievement Tests (SAT) data for five classes of children who were taught reading by the LLL methods and techniques in grade 1 and a basal reading program in grade 2. For both districts the means for SAT Word Meaning and Paragraph Meaning were somewhat above the national norms. A third district used the LLL system in a corrective and remedial experiment classroom with third-grade children. At the end of third grade, 35 children took Houghton Mifflin achievement tests. For more than 90 percent of 18 possible scores, the children scored at or above the critical score (80 percent or above), thus showing they were ready to reenter any fourth-grade classroom and read on or above grade level. Reports of two large-scale comparative research projects of LLL and basal programs may be found in RE 003 496 and RE 001 561. Graphs and tables are included. (DH)

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No. 1

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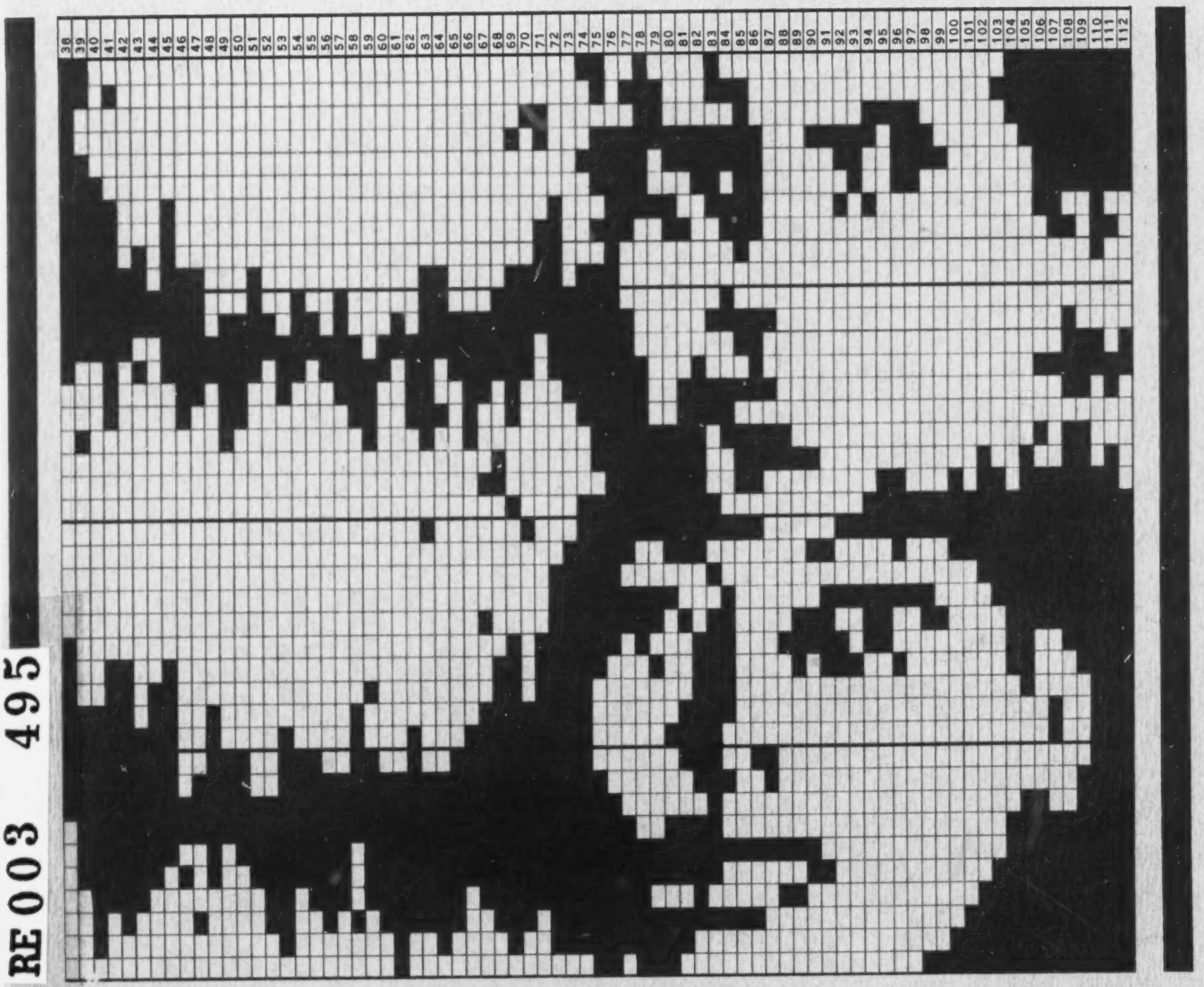

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INTRODUCTION

The necessity to provide for students' long-term needs in communication skills development should be quite evident; yet, many school districts have become involved in programs for pre-school, Head Start, or early grades without making sufficient provisions for the years of instruction that follow.

Research evidence supports the need for longitudinal studies or evaluations. For example, recent research indicates that students who have had instruction in reading in kindergarten are able to make large gains over similar students who have not had kindergarten reading instruction, but these students lose their advantage by the time they reach grade three if they are returned to regular classes after the kindergarten reading experience. However, if they continue in an enriched program, the rate of growth is maintained, and results in markedly greater reading comprehension and speed than that shown by children in the regular program.[1]

Feedback from the Head Start Program and other studies also indicates that gains made by students in remedial or special programs are lost when these students are placed in regular classrooms without continued special help.[2] This loss is due to what we will identify as the "dilution" effect. A longitudinal evaluation provides for following student growth over a period of years so that it can be determined if gains are long lasting and the extent to which an innovative approach is effective.

Since the LLL system is designed to provide reading and related communication skills for primary-grade students, a longitudinal evaluation of three years is recommended. However, for those school districts that wish to do further evaluation at grade one before expanding LLL into higher grades, the question of what effect the transition to a basal program will have on the students is a valid one. EDL has conducted a small follow-up study to determine how easily this transition has taken place. This report is a summary of the results of two school districts that participated in this follow-up study. Additional information regarding student transition and generalization of learning from LLL to basal materials was furnished by a third district that used the LLL system in a corrective and remedial situation.

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[1]Paul McKee and Joseph E. Brzeinski, "The Effectiveness of Teaching Reading in Kindergarten," a report for the Colorado State Department of Education as part of a Cooperative Research Project grant. Available from ERIC (ED-010-058)

[2]Fred M. Hechinger, "Head Start to Where?" Saturday Review, 48 (December 18, 1965), 58-60+.

Two school districts used the LLL system in first-grade classrooms during the 1966-67 school year and rather than continue the LLL system for these children as second graders, they returned them to second-grade basal programs and began new groups in first grade using the LLL system. These first-year LLL installations were treated by these school districts as pilot projects.

It was of interest to the research department to obtain information about these groups of children to determine what, if any, difficulties were encountered by first-year LLL students who were not given the opportunity to continue with LLL in their second year. As discussed previously, research tends to support the fact that there is greater accumulated achievement if children continue in enriched educational environments over an extended period of time. It is the opinion of the EDL editorial staff that the LLL system should be used and will be of greatest advantage for the individual child if the entire primary language arts program (grades one through three) is structured by the continuity implicit in the design of the LLL system.

To answer the question of what effect the transition from LLL to a basal program had on students, data were requested from all second-grade teachers of basal programs who had in their classrooms children who had used the LLL system as first graders. The second-grade teachers from whom this information was requested had never been involved in the first-grade LLL research and, therefore, were willing to participate in this follow-up study only to a limited extent. Data were received from two school districts. One district sent information for two classrooms and one district for three classrooms. Each child considered in this study had, as a first grader, used the LLL system and, as a second grader, returned to a classroom in which a basal program was used. Each reporting school district will be examined separately.

REPORTING DISTRICT I

The reading supervisor from this district returned class lists of second-grade children with the corresponding Stanford Achievement Test subtest scores for the two classrooms of second-grade children who had used the LLL system as first graders. This district used the first-year study as a pilot project and new groups of first-grade children began the LLL system the following year.

Descriptive data (means and standard deviations) were computed for these two classes in an attempt to determine how well they had achieved. Test data from the Metropolitan Achievement Test, administered in May, 1967 (end of first grade) and test data from the Stanford Achievement Test, administered in May 1968 (end of second grade) was available for this sample. Since different tests were administered, no direct difference between means could be computed.

Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc., the publisher of both tests, was contacted in an attempt to obtain a correlation coefficient between the two tests. To their knowledge, no such statistic has been computed. It was the opinion of the test publisher that only the Reading subtest from the MAT and the Paragraph Meaning subtest from the SAT can be meaningfully compared. All other subtest scores can only be considered as they relate to national norms.

Table I is a summary of achievement test scores for the children from this district over the two-year period. IQ scores are also provided. It can be seen that for both classes and for all subtests of the MAT the average or mean values are well above national norms (1.8). The Reading subtest means of 2.7 and 2.9 are essentially one year above norm values. The standard deviation(s) is useful in that it defines the range within which 68 per cent of the children scored. For example, for the Reading subtest of the MAT, the children from Class A had a mean score of 2.7 (9 months above norm value) with a standard deviation of .7. This means that 68 per cent (approximately eighteen children) read in the range of 2.0 to 3.4. For the children in Class B, 68 per cent (approximately twenty children) read in the range of 2.3 to 3.5 with a mean of 2.9 (11 months above national norm). For the Paragraph Meaning subtest of the SAT, eighteen children from Class A scored within a range of 2.3 to 4.1 with a mean of 3.2 (4 months above norm value) and in Class B twenty children scored within a range of 2.5 to 4.1 with a mean of 3.3 (5 months above norm value).

TABLE I

GRADE SCORE MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS OF FIFTY-SIX CHILDREN FROM TWO CLASSES WHO HAD ONE YEAR OF LLL AND ONE YEAR OF A BASAL PROGRAM

Group	N	IQ[c]	Metropolitan Achievement Test[a]						Stanford Achievement[b] Test			
			Word Knowledge		Word Discrimination		Reading		Word Meaning		Paragraph Meaning	
			Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
CLASS A	27	103.03	2.5	.5	2.7	.5	2.7	.7	3.0	.8	3.2	.9
CLASS B	29	111.23	2.8	.6	3.1	.7	2.9	.6	3.5	.9	3.3	.8

[a]Administered in May 1967. Grade equivalency national norm is 1.8.
[b]Administered in May 1968. Grade equivalency national norm is 2.8.
[c]Pintner-Cunningham Primary Test.

REPORTING DISTRICT II

The Reading Supervisor from a second district returned test information for three classrooms of children within the district who had their first year with the LLL system and then were placed in second-grade basal programs. This district also used the first-year study as a pilot project and new groups of first-grade children began the LLL system the following year. Table II is a summary of the achievement scores at the end of second grade for the children who had been in the three original LLL classes. It should be noted that IQ measures for these classes were lower, on the average, than were comparable measures from the first district considered in this report. Results from the Vocabulary subtest of the SAT were available for these children and are, in fact, quite high. For example, Class A, with a mean IQ of 96.45, scored at a mean grade equivalency of 3.8 with a standard deviation of 8 months. Sixty-eight per cent of this group scored in the range of 3.0 to 4.6, well above national norms for this subtest.

The data from this second reporting district should be examined in the same manner as was the data from the first district. Although the subtests other than MAT Reading and SAT Paragraph Meaning are of interest in obtaining a clear picture of the average child's academic development, only the two subtests mentioned are considered by the test publisher to be comparable in content. Table II is a summary of the achievement scores of these children over the two-year period.

TABLE II

GRADE SCORE MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS OF FIFTY-ONE CHILDREN FROM THREE CLASSES WHO HAD ONE YEAR OF LLL AND ONE YEAR OF A BASAL PROGRAM

			Metropolitan Achievement Test[a]						Stanford Achievement Test[b]					
			Word Knowledge		Word Discrimination		Reading		Word Reading		Paragraph Meaning		Vocabulary	
Group	N	IQ[c]	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
CLASS A	19	96.45	2.2	.4	2.2	.7	2.1	.6	3.0	.5	3.0	.7	3.8	.8
CLASS B	16	99.52	2.7	.5	2.4	.7	2.7	.7	3.0	.6	3.0	.9	3.3	.7
CLASS C	16	97.61	2.7	.6	2.1	.6	2.4	.6	2.9	.5	2.8	.6	3.4	.9

[a]Administered in May 1967. Grade equivalency national norm is 1.8.
[b]Administered in May 1968. Grade equivalency national norm is 2.8.
[c]Pintner-Cunningham Primary Test.

Mean values for the three classes were 2.1, 2.4, and 2.7 on the Reading subtest of the MAT at the end of grade one. These values exceed norm values by 3, 6, and 9 months. Mean values for the same children on the Paragraph Meaning subtest of the SAT at the end of grade two were 2.8, 3.0, and 3.0 which exceed norm values by 2 months for the two higher achieving groups.

In addition to the returned test data, the three teachers of the second-grade classrooms who used a basal program did complete and return questionnaires submitted to them by EDL. Table III is a summary of the responses of these three teachers.

TABLE III

SUMMARY OF REACTIONS OF SECOND-GRADE TEACHERS OF CHILDREN WHO HAD USED THE LLL SYSTEM AS FIRST GRADERS

1. Please compare your LLL pupils to other pupils with similar ability in your class regarding the following aspects of academic performance.	LLL Children Are		
	Better	About the Same	Not as Good
Independent Reading	3	0	0
Enthusiasm for Reading	1	2	0
Independence in Work	2	1	0
Planning Own Learning Activities	2	1	0
General Speaking Ability	0	3	0
General Listening Ability	2	1	0
Creative Writing	1	2	0
Use of Word Attack Skills	2	1	0
Spelling Ability	0	3	0

2. Describe the children's reactions to the differences in the reading programs.

Teacher A: The children were disappointed at first because they no longer had the machines.

Teacher B: At first they were disappointed that we had no machines, etc., to use, but now they make no comments.

Teacher C: The LLL children adjusted well to the reading program that is now in progress in my room.

3. What, if any, special provisions were made to help the children make a successful transition from LLL to their present program?

Teacher A: More reading materials and activities were provided since some of the children worked at a faster rate and higher level than the children who had not had the program.

Teacher B: None in second grade because the LLL teacher had prepared them at the end of the year by having them read in the GINN books.

Teacher C: No special provisions are necessary. The previous teacher was very efficient. Therefore, the children were able to adjust easily to any program.

SUMMARY OF RESULTS FROM TWO REPORTING DISTRICTS

Although extremely limited data is available, it appears from information received that children who have had one year of LLL instruction and then are placed, as second graders, into a basal program are able to compete successfully with children who have had one year of traditional instruction. It is apparent that these children achieved well beyond national norms at the end of their first year in school. This would be expected from evidence obtained in two large-scale comparative research projects conducted with children in LLL and basal programs (see EDL Research and Information Bulletin No. 10 and No. 12). A study is now in progress that should indicate the cumulative effect on achievement for children using the LLL system for two years. Until these data are analyzed, it would be premature to suggest that the drop in growth rate from the end of first grade (LLL usage) to the end of second grade (basal program) is related to the change in the instructional

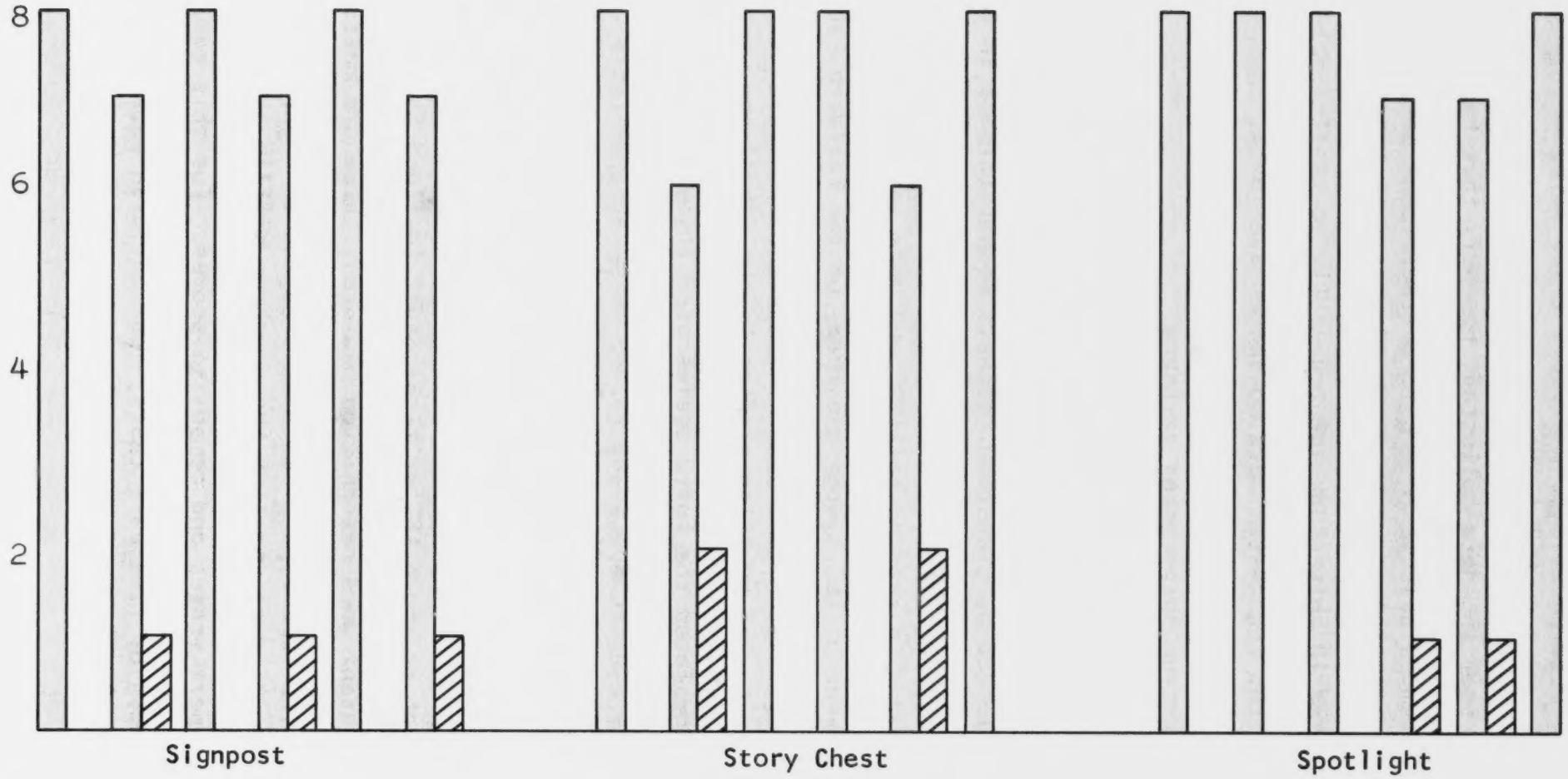
program. It should, in fact, be assumed that the difference in growth rate is primarily attributable to different tests being administered in May 1967 (MAT) and May 1968 (SAT).

It is clear from the data collected, however, that for this sample of more than one hundred children, the average child who has used the LLL system is able to return to a traditional basal program with little or no special adaptations in the basal program. From subjective information from second-grade teachers, the sample of children considered in this study adapted easily to traditional programs although they were initially disappointed that the instruments from the LLL system were no longer available.

A SAMPLE OF CORRECTIVE THIRD-GRADE CHILDREN

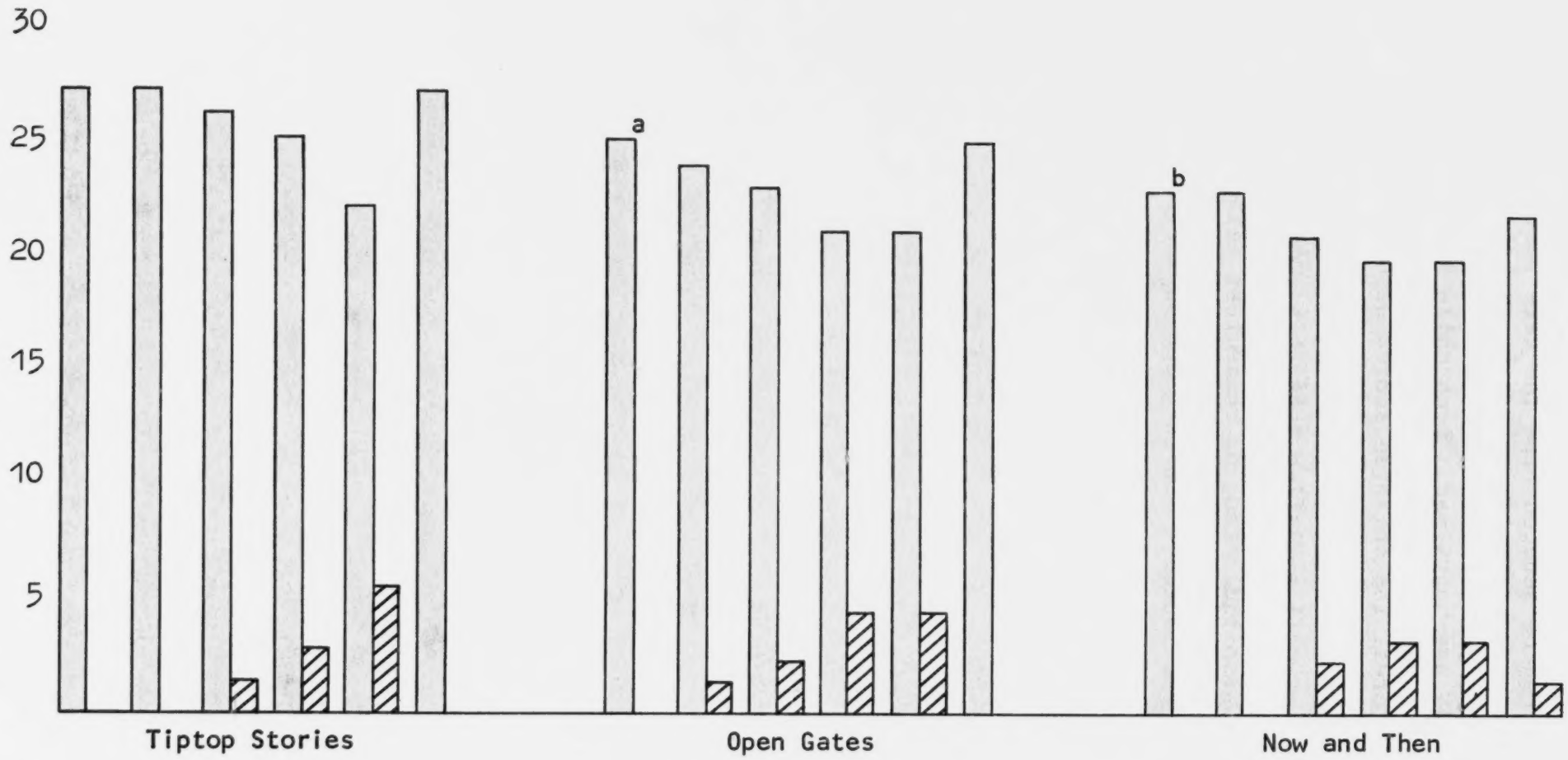
In addition to the five classes of children discussed who transferred from LLL in Grade 1 to basal programs in Grade 2, one corrective and remedial installation is of interest with respect to the adjustment of LLL children to basal materials. Third-grade children were selected by classroom teachers to participate in the LLL experimental classroom because they were considered to be underachievers (average or above ability but one or more years below national norms in reading ability) and very immature with respect to their approach to the total school situation. By May 1968, after one year of LLL system use, many of the children had completed forty cycles of LLL instruction, the total number of cycles available at that time. Some of these children were given the basal textbooks used by third graders in the school and were allowed to read them as non-assigned supplemental reading material. Others who had completed the forty cycles used listening activities rather than additional reading activities. All were given the appropriate basal achievement tests in May which are routinely administered in the school district. Figures 1 and 2 are summaries of these test results.

Eight children took the Houghton Mifflin Climbing Higher test. There are fifteen part scores and three composite scores on this test. The graph has been prepared to show the number of these children who scored at or above the critical level (defined by the test publisher to be 80 per cent) on each part and composite score. Six part scores represent word recognition measures, three are measures of the use of context and phonetic clues, and three are measures of comprehension. The same type of data is provided in Figure 2 for the twenty-seven children who took the Houghton Mifflin Looking Ahead achievement test which is designed in essentially the same way in terms of part scores and composite scores. For this test, two children did not take the second group of five part tests, and for the third group of five part tests, four children were absent and did not take the test.



Number of Children Who Scored Above the Critical Score on Part and Composite Scores of the Basal Achievement Test Climbing Higher.

Figure 1



Number of Children Who Scored at or Above the Critical Score on Part and Composite Scores of the Basal Achievement Test Looking Ahead.

[a]Two children did not take this section.
[b]Four children did not take this section.

Figure 2

In summary, it can be deduced from the data that for this sample of previously underachieving children, satisfactory achievement in terms of established norms on a basal reading standardized test had been attained. Each child had a possibility of eighteen part or composite scores. For more than 90 per cent of these possible scores, the children scored at or above the critical score (80 per cent or above) after one year of LLL instruction. The administrator, in reporting these scores, indicated that she was well satisfied that this sample of underachieving children had not only been able to achieve well in the LLL system, but had also indicated, by these test results, that they were able to reenter any fourth-grade classroom at a level equal to, or above, the school's fourth-grade population.